

REMARKS

The Applicant respectfully traverses the Election/Restriction Requirement on the basis that the generic claims patentably define over the prior art. The fastener installation head disclosed and claimed in the generic claims is unique and provides important advantages over the prior art. The assignee of this application is the successor in interest of Multifastener Corporation which invented the *first pierce nut over 50 years ago* as disclosed in the patents cited in the Background of the Invention. Piercc and clinch nuts have been very commercially successful. However, as will be understood from the prior patents cited in the Background of the Invention, all prior pierce and clinch nut installation heads feed and install *only one nut* with each stroke of the plunger. Further, the proximity probes which confirm receipt of a nut in the plunger passage is subject to wear and damage.

The fastener installation head of this invention includes at least two parallel plungers which reciprocate through parallel plunger passage to *simultaneously install* at least two pierce or clinch nuts with each stroke of the plungers. This allows installation of two or more fasteners *in close proximity* which was not possible with two conventional installation heads because of the bulk required for the installation heads and the preferred embodiment of the fastener installation head of this invention eliminates wear or damage to the proximity probe or debris interfering with sensing of a fastener in the plunger passages.

In the embodiment of the fastener installation apparatus shown in Figures 1 to 6, the plunger assembly 84 includes two parallel plungers 88 integral with a base portion 86 which is attached to a fixed member 20. In the embodiment of the fastener installation head shown in Figures 7 and 8, the plunger assembly 120 includes two parallel plungers 122 having an end portion 136 received in openings 128 in the fixed member 130. The plunger assembly in both embodiments function *identically*; that is, the parallel plungers (88 in Figure 1 and 122 in Figure 7) are received or reciprocate through plunger passages 82 (see Figures 2 and 4) and

Atty. Docket No. 60,152-1051

install fasteners received in the plunger passages from the parallel feed passages 70 also shown in Figure 4. Other than the plunger assembly described above, the remainder of the fastener installation head shown in Figures 1 to 8 *may be identical* and the method of installation is the same.

The Applicant therefore respectfully requests reconsideration of the Election/Restriction Requirement upon allowance of one or more of the generic claims.

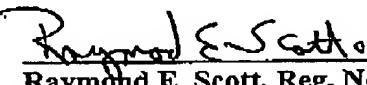
Although it is believed that no fee is due for the filing of this Response, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2789 for any additional fees or credit the account for any overpayments regarding this Response. Further and favorable reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

HOWARD & HOWARD ATTORNEYS, P.C.

May 17, 2005

Date

  
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Auy. Docket No. 60,152-1051

CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that the attached Response to Restriction/Election Requirement is being facsimile transmitted to Examiner David P. Bryant, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, at facsimile number (703) 872-9306 on May 17, 2005.

Tracy L. Smith  
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